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by Bob “Dr. Mac” LeVitus

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OS X® Mavericks For Dummies®

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Introduction

You made the right choice twice: OS X Mavericks and this book. Take a deep breath and get ready to have a rollicking good time. That's right. This is a computer book, but it's fun. What a concept! Whether you're brand spanking new to the Mac or a grizzled Mac vet, I guarantee that reading this book to discover the ins and outs of OS X Mavericks will make everything easier. The publisher couldn't say as much on the cover if it weren't true!

About This Book

This book's roots lie with my international best seller *Macintosh System 7.5 For Dummies*, an award-winning book so good that now-deceased Mac cloner Power Computing gave away a copy with every Mac clone it sold. *OS X Mavericks For Dummies* is the latest revision and has been, once again, completely updated to include all the OS X goodness in Mavericks. In other words, this edition combines all the old, familiar features of previous editions — but is once again updated to reflect the latest and greatest offering from Apple as well as feedback from readers.

Why write a *For Dummies* book about Mavericks? Well, Mavericks is a big, somewhat complicated personal-computer operating system. So I made *OS X Mavericks For Dummies* a not-so-big, not-very-complicated book that shows you what Mavericks is all about without boring you to tears, confusing you, or poking you with sharp objects.

In fact, I think you'll be so darned comfortable that I wanted the title to be *OS X Mavericks Made Easy*, but the publishers wouldn't let me. Apparently, we *For Dummies* authors have to follow some rules and using *For Dummies* and *OS X Mavericks* in this book's title are among them.

And speaking of *dummies*, remember that's just a word. I don't think you're a dummy at all — quite the opposite! My second choice for this book's title was *OS X Mavericks For People Smart Enough to Know They Need This Book*, but you can just imagine what Wiley thought of that. ("C'mon, that's the whole point of the name!" they insisted. "Besides, it's shorter our way.")

The book is chock full of information and advice, explaining everything you need to know about OS X in language you can understand — along with timesaving tips, tricks, techniques, and step-by-step instructions, all served up in generous quantities.

Another rule we *For Dummies* authors must follow is that our books cannot exceed a certain number of pages. (Brevity is the soul of wit, and all that.) So I wish I could have included some things, but they didn't fit. Although I feel confident you'll find everything you need to know about OS X Mavericks in this book, some things bear further looking into, including these:

- ✓ **Information about some of the applications (programs) that come with OS X Mavericks:** An installation of OS X Mavericks includes roughly 50 separate applications, mostly located in the Applications folder and the Utilities folder within it. I'd love to walk you through each one of them, but that would have required a book a whole lot bigger, heavier, and more expensive than this one.

I brief you on the small handful of bundled applications essential to using OS X Mavericks and keep the focus there — namely, Calendar, Contacts, Messages, Mail, Safari, TextEdit, and the like, as well as important utilities you may need to know how to use someday.

For what it's worth, many books cover the applications that come with OS X Mavericks, as well as applications commonly bundled with Mavericks on a new Mac, such as iLife; the one my publisher suggested I recommend is *OS X Mavericks All-in-One For Dummies*, written by Mark L. Chambers, which is (of course) also published by Wiley.

- ✓ **Information about Microsoft Office, iLife, iWork, Adobe Photoshop, Quicken, and most other third-party applications:** Okay, if all the gory details of all the bundled (read: *free*) OS X Mavericks applications don't fit here, I think you'll understand why digging into third-party applications that cost extra was out of the question.
- ✓ **Information about programming for the Mac:** This book is about *using* OS X Mavericks, not writing code for it. Dozens of books cover programming on the Mac, most of which are two or three times the size of this book.

Conventions Used in This Book

To get the most out of this book, you need to know how I do things and why. Here are a few conventions I use in this book to make your life easier:

- ✓ When I want you to open an item in a menu, I write something like Choose File⇨Open, which means, "Pull down the File menu and choose the Open command."
- ✓ Stuff you're supposed to type appears in bold type, **like this**.

- ✔ Sometimes an entire a sentence is in boldface, as you see when I present a numbered list of steps. In those cases, I leave the bold off what you're supposed to type, like this.
- ✔ Web addresses, programming code (not much in this book), and things that appear onscreen are shown in a special monofont typeface, like this. (If you're reading an ebook version of this book, web addresses are clickable links.)
- ✔ For keyboard shortcuts, I write something like ⌘+A, which means to hold down the ⌘ key (the one with the little pretzel and/or 🍏 symbol on it) and then press the A key on the keyboard. If you see something like ⌘+Shift+A, that means to hold down the ⌘ and Shift keys while pressing the A key. Again, for clarity, I never refer to the ⌘ key with the 🍏 symbol. I reserve that symbol for the 🍏 menu (Apple menu). For the Command key, I use only the ⌘ symbol. Got it? Very cool.

Foolish Assumptions

Although I know what happens when you make assumptions, I've made a few anyway. First, I assume that you, gentle reader, know nothing about using OS X — beyond knowing what a Mac is, that you want to use OS X, that you want to understand OS X without having to digest an incomprehensible technical manual, and that you made the right choice by selecting this particular book. And so I do my best to explain each new concept in full and loving detail. Maybe that's foolish, but . . . that's how I roll.

Oh, and I also assume that you can read. If you can't, ignore this paragraph.

Beyond the Book

We have written a lot of extra content that you won't find in this book. Go online to find the following:

- ✔ **Online articles covering additional topics at**
www.dummies.com/extras/osxmavericks
- ✔ **The Cheat Sheet for this book is at**
www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/osxmavericks
- ✔ **Updates to this book, if we have any, are at**
www.dummies.com/extras/osxmavericksfdupdates

Icons Used in This Book

Little round pictures (icons) appear off to the left side of the text throughout this book. Consider these icons miniature road signs, telling you a little something extra about the topic at hand. Here's what the different icons look like and what they all mean.



Look for Tip icons to find the juiciest morsels: shortcuts, tips, and undocumented secrets about Mavericks. Try them all; impress your friends!



When you see this icon, it means that this particular morsel is something that I think you should memorize (or at least write on your shirt cuff).



Put on your propeller-beanie hat and pocket protector; these parts include the truly geeky stuff. It's certainly not required reading, but it must be interesting or informative, or I wouldn't have wasted your time with it.



Read these notes very, very, very carefully. (Did I say *very*?) Warning icons flag important cautionary information. The author and publisher won't be responsible if your Mac explodes or spews flaming parts because you ignored a Warning icon. Just kidding. Macs don't explode or spew (with the exception of a few choice PowerBook 5300s, which won't run Mavericks anyway). But I got your attention, didn't I?



These icons represent my ranting or raving about something that either bugs me or makes me smile. When I'm ranting, imagine foam coming from my mouth. Rants are required to be irreverent, irrelevant, or both. I try to keep them short, for your sake.



Well, now, what could this icon possibly be about? Named by famous editorial consultant Mr. Obvious, this icon highlights all things new and different in OS X Mavericks.

Where to Go from Here

The first few chapters of this book are where I describe the basic things that you need to understand to operate your Mac effectively. If you're new to Macs and OS X Mavericks, start there.

Even though OS X Mavericks is somewhat different from previous Mac operating systems, the first part of the book is so basic that if you've been using a Mac for long, you might think you know it all — and okay, you might know most of it. But hey! Not-so-old-timers need a solid foundation. So here's my advice: Skip the stuff you know; you'll get to the better stuff faster.



I would love to hear how this book worked for you. So please send me your thoughts, platitudes, likes and dislikes, and any other comments. Did this book work for you? What did you like? What didn't you like? What questions were unanswered? Did you want to know more (or less) about something? Tell me! I have received more than 100 suggestions about previous editions, most of which are incorporated here. So keep up the good work! E-mail me at Mavericks4Dummies@boblevitus.com. I appreciate your feedback, and I *try* to respond to all reasonably polite e-mail within a few days.

So what are you waiting for? Go — enjoy the book!

Part I

getting started
with

OS X

Mavericks



Visit www.dummies.com for great Dummies content online.

In this part...

- ✓ In the beginning: The most basic of basics including how to turn your Mac on.
- ✓ A gentle introduction to Mavericks' Finder and its Desktop.
- ✓ Making Mavericks work the way you want it to by customizing it to suit your style.
- ✓ Your Dock: Making it work harder for you.
- ✓ Everything you need to know about Mavericks' windows, icons, and menus (oh my)!
- ✓ All the bad puns and wisecracks you've come to expect.
- ✓ A plethora of Finder tips and tricks to make life with Mavericks even easier (and more fulfilling).
- ✓ Visit www.dummies.com/extras/osxmavericks for great Dummies content online.



1



OS X Mavericks 101 (Prerequisites: None)

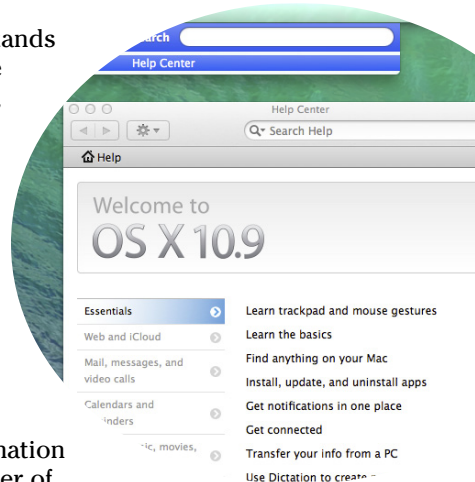
In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding what an operating system is and is not
- ▶ Turning on your Mac
- ▶ Getting to know the startup process
- ▶ Turning off your Mac
- ▶ Avoiding major Mac mistakes
- ▶ Pointing, clicking, dragging, and other uses for your mouse
- ▶ Getting help from your Mac

Congratulate yourself on choosing OS X, which stands for (Macintosh) *Operating System X* — that’s the Roman numeral *ten*, not the letter *X* (pronounced *ten*, not *ex*). You made a smart move because you scored more than just an operating-system upgrade. OS X Mavericks includes several new features that make using your Mac easier and dozens of improvements that help you do more work in less time.

In this chapter, I start at the very beginning and talk about OS X in mostly abstract terms; then I move on to explain what you need to know to use OS X Mavericks successfully.

If you’ve been using OS X for a while, some of the information in this chapter may seem hauntingly familiar; a number of features that I describe haven’t changed from earlier versions of OS X. But if you decide to skip this chapter because you think you have all the new stuff figured out, I assure you that you’ll miss at least a couple of things that Apple didn’t bother to tell you (as if you read every word in OS X Help — the only user manual Apple provides — anyway!).



Tantalized? Let's rock.



One last thing: If you're about to upgrade to Mavericks from an earlier version of OS X, you might want to peruse the Appendix first. It describes the process of installing or reinstalling Mavericks in full and loving detail and has other useful information about installing Mavericks. Download the Appendix from www.dummies.com/downloads/osxmavericks.

Gnawing to the Core of OS X

The operating system (that is, the *OS* in *OS X*) is what makes a Mac a Mac. Without it, your Mac is a pile of silicon and circuits — no smarter than a toaster.

“So what does an operating system do?” you ask. Good question. The short answer is that an operating system controls the basic and most important functions of your computer. In the case of OS X and your Mac, the operating system

- ✓ Manages memory.
- ✓ Controls how windows, icons, and menus work.
- ✓ Keeps track of files.
- ✓ Manages networking.
- ✓ Does housekeeping. (No kidding!)

Other forms of software, such as word processors and web browsers, rely on the operating system to create and maintain the environment in which they work their magic. When you create a memo, for example, the word processor provides the tools for you to type and format the information. In the background, the operating system is the muscle for the word processor, performing crucial functions such as the following:

- ✓ Providing the mechanism for drawing and moving the onscreen window in which you write the memo
- ✓ Keeping track of a file when you save it
- ✓ Helping the word processor create drop-down menus and dialogs for you to interact with
- ✓ Communicating with other programs
- ✓ And much, much more (stuff that only geeks could care about)

So, armed with a little background in operating systems, take a gander at the next section before you do anything else with your Mac.



The Mac advantage

Most of the world's personal computers use Microsoft Windows (though more and more people are switching to the Mac these days). But you're among the lucky few to have a computer with an operating system that's intuitive, easy to use, and (dare I say?) fun. If you don't believe me, try using Windows for a day or two. Go ahead. You probably won't suffer any permanent damage. In fact, you'll really begin to appreciate how good you have it. Feel free to hug your Mac. Or give it a peck on the disc-drive slot (assuming your Mac has one; most, including the MacBook Air and Mac Mini at this writing, don't). Just try not to get your tongue caught.

As someone once told me, "Claiming that the Macintosh is inferior to Windows because more people use Windows is like saying that all other restaurants serve food that's inferior to McDonald's."

We might be a minority, but Mac users have the best, most stable, most modern all-purpose operating system in the world, and here's why: Unix, on which OS X is based, is widely regarded

as the best industrial-strength operating system on the planet. For now, just know that being based on Unix means that a Mac running OS X will crash less often than an older Mac or a Windows machine, which means less downtime. Being Unix-based also means far fewer viruses and malicious software. But perhaps the biggest advantage OS X has is that when an application crashes, it doesn't crash your entire computer, and you don't have to restart the whole computer to continue working.

By the way, with the advent of Intel-powered Macs a few years ago, you can now run Windows natively. That's right — you can now install and run Microsoft Windows on any Mac powered by an Intel processor, as I describe in Chapter 17. Don't let that Unix stuff scare you. It's there if you want it, but if you don't want it or don't care (like most of us), you'll rarely even know it's there. In fact, you'll rarely (if ever) see the word *Unix* again in this book. As far as you're concerned, Unix under the hood means your Mac will just run and run and run without crashing and crashing and crashing.

One last thing: As I mention in this book's Introduction (I'm repeating it here only in case you normally don't read introductions), OS X Mavericks comes with more than 50 applications. Although I'd love to tell you all about each and every one, I have only so many pages at my disposal. If you need more info on the programs I don't cover, may I (again) recommend *OS X Mavericks All-in-One For Dummies*, written by Mark L. Chambers, or *iLife For Dummies*, written by my old friends Tony Bove and Cheryl Rhodes (both published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.).

A Safety Net for the Absolute Beginner (Or Any User)

In the following sections, I deal with the stuff that OS X Help doesn't cover — or doesn't cover in nearly enough detail. If you're a first-time Macintosh user, please, *please* read this section of the book carefully; it could save your life. Okay, okay, perhaps I'm being overly dramatic. What I mean to say is that reading this section could save your *Mac* or your sanity. Even if you're an experienced Mac user, you may want to read this section. Chances are you'll see at least a few things you've forgotten that will come in handy now that you've been reminded of them.

Turning the dang thing on

Okay. This is the big moment — turning on your Mac! Gaze at it longingly first, and say something cheesy, such as “You're the most awesome computer I've ever known.” If that doesn't turn on your Mac (and it probably won't), keep reading.

Apple, in its infinite wisdom, has manufactured Macs with power buttons on every conceivable surface: on the front, side, and back of the computer itself and even on the keyboard and monitor.

So if you don't know how to turn on your Mac, don't feel bad; just look in the manual or booklet that came with your Mac. It's at least one thing that the documentation *always* covers.



These days, most Macs have a power-on button near the keyboard (notebooks) or the back (iMacs). It usually looks like the little circle thingy you see in the margin.



Don't bother choosing Help→Mac Help, which opens the Help Viewer program. It can't tell you where the switch is. Although the Help program is good for finding out a lot of things, the location of the power button isn't among them. If you haven't found the switch and turned on the Mac, of course, you can't access Help anyway. (D'oh!)

What you should see on startup

When you finally do turn on your Macintosh, you set in motion a sophisticated and complex series of events that culminates in the loading of OS X and the appearance of the OS X Desktop. After a small bit of whirring, buzzing, and flashing (meaning that the operating system is loading), OS X first tests all your hardware — slots, ports, disks, random-access memory (RAM), and so on. If everything passes, you hear a pleasing musical tone and see the tasteful gray Apple logo in the middle of your screen, along with a small spinning-pinwheel cursor somewhere on the screen. Both are shown in Figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1: This is what you'll see if everything is fine and dandy when you turn on your Mac.

Here are the things that might happen when you power up your Mac:



- ✓ **Fine and dandy:** Next, you might or might not see the OS X login screen, where you enter your name and password. If you do, press Return or Enter (after you type your name and password, of course), and away you go.

If you don't want to have to type your name and password every time you start or restart your Mac (or even if you do), check out Chapter 17 for the scoop on how to turn the login screen on or off.

Either way, the Desktop soon materializes before your eyes. If you haven't customized, configured, or tinkered with your Desktop, it should look pretty much like Figure 1-2. Now is a good time to take a moment for positive thoughts about the person who convinced you that you wanted a Mac. That person was right!

- ✓ **Blue/black/gray screen of death:** If any of your hardware fails when it's tested, you may see a blue, black, or gray screen.

Some older Macs played the sound of a horrible car wreck instead of the chimes, complete with crying tires and busting glass. It was exceptionally unnerving, which might be why Apple doesn't use it anymore.



The fact that something went wrong is no reflection on your prowess as a Macintosh user. Something is broken, and your Mac may need repairs. If this is happening to you right now, check out Chapter 20 to try to get your Mac well again.



If your computer is under warranty, dial 1-800-SOS-APPL, and a customer-service person can tell you what to do. Before you do anything, though, skip ahead to Chapter 20. It's entirely possible that one of the suggestions there can get you back on track without your having to spend even a moment on hold.



- ✓ **Prohibitory sign (formerly known as the flashing-question-mark disk):** Most users eventually encounter the prohibitory sign shown in the left margin (which replaced the flashing question-mark-on-a-disk icon and flashing folder icon back in OS X Jaguar). This icon means that your

Mac can't find a startup disk, hard drive, network server, or DVD-ROM containing a valid Macintosh operating system. See Chapter 20 for ways to ease your Mac's ills.

- ✓ **Kernel panic:** You shouldn't see this very often, but you may occasionally see a block of text in six languages, including English, as shown in Figure 1-3. This means that your Mac has experienced a *kernel panic*, the most severe type of system crash. If you restart your Mac and see this message again, look in Chapter 20 for a myriad of possible cures for all kinds of ailments, including this one.



Figure 1-2: The OS X Mavericks Desktop after a brand-spanking-new installation of OS X.



How do you know which version of the Mac OS your computer has? Simple:

1. **Choose About This Mac from the  menu (the menu with the  symbol in the top-left corner of the menu bar).**

The About This Mac window pops up on your screen, as shown in Figure 1-4. The version you're running appears just below *OS X* in the center of the window. Version 10.9 is the release we know as *Mavericks*.

If you're curious or just want to impress your friends, OS X version 10.8 was known as Mountain Lion; 10.7 as Lion; 10.6 as Snow Leopard; 10.5 as Leopard; 10.4 as Tiger; 10.3 as Panther; 10.2 as Jaguar; 10.1 as Puma; and 10.0 as Cheetah. And, by the way, Mavericks is the name of a famous surfing beach near Half Moon Bay, California.



2. Click the More Info button to launch the System Information application.

This app shows you much more information, including bus speed, number of processors, caches, installed memory, networking, storage devices, and much more. You can find more about this useful program in Chapter 19.

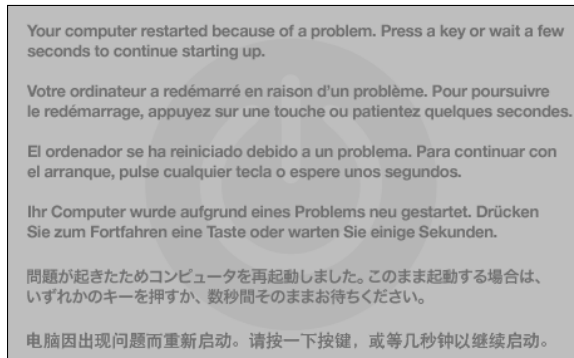


Figure 1-3: If this is what you're seeing, things are definitely *not* fine and dandy.



Figure 1-4: See which version of OS X you're running.

Shutting down properly

Turning off the power without shutting down your Mac properly is one of the worst things you can do to your poor Mac. Shutting down your Mac improperly can really screw up your hard or solid-state drive, scramble the contents of your most important files, or both.



If a thunderstorm is rumbling nearby, or you're unfortunate enough to have rolling blackouts where you live, you may really want to shut down your Mac. (See the next section, where I briefly discuss lightning and your Mac.)



To turn off your Mac, always use the Shut Down command on the  menu or shut down in one of these kind-and-gentle ways:

- ✓ Press the Power button once and then click the Shut Down button in the Are You Sure You Want to Shut Down Your Computer Now? dialog.
- ✓ On keyboards that don't have a Power key, press Control+Eject instead — then click the Shut Down button that appears in the Are You Sure You Want to Shut Down Your Computer Now? dialog.



You can use a handy keyboard shortcut when the Shut Down button (or any button, for that matter) is highlighted in blue and pulsating slightly. Pressing the Return or Enter key is the same as clicking that button.

The Are You Sure You Want to Shut Down Your Computer Now? dialog sports a check-box option in OS X Mavericks: Reopen Windows When Logging Back In. If you check this box, your Mac will start back up with the same windows (and applications) that were open when you shut down or restarted. I think it's pretty darn sweet! I'm happy to report that Mavericks is full of such nice little improvements.

Eternally yours . . . now

OS X is designed so that you never have to shut it down. You can configure it to sleep after a specified period of inactivity. (See Chapter 17 for more info on the Energy Saver features of OS X.) If you do so, your Mac will consume very little electricity when it's sleeping and will usually be ready to use (when you press any key or click the mouse) in less than a minute. On the other hand, if you're not going to be using it for a few days, you might want to shut it down anyway.

Note: If you leave your Mac on constantly, and you're gone when a lightning storm or rolling

blackout hits, your Mac might get wasted. So be sure you have adequate protection — say, a decent surge protector designed specifically for computers — if you decide to leave your Mac on and unattended for long periods. See the section “A few things you should definitely NOT do with your Mac,” elsewhere in this chapter, for more info on lightning and your Mac. Often as not, I leave it on when I'm on the road so that I can access it from my laptop via remote screen sharing. So, because OS X is designed to run 24/7, I don't shut it down at night unless the night happens to be dark and stormy.